



## **ROCKY MOUNTAIN COORDINATING GROUP**

**Bureau of Indian Affairs** (Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Great Plains Regions)

**Bureau of Land Management** (Colorado and Wyoming)

**Fish and Wildlife Service** (Mountain/Prairie Region)

**Forest Service** (Rocky Mountain Region)

**National Park Service** (Intermountain and Midwest Regions)

**State Agencies in Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas**

RMCG Conference Call  
September 04, 2008

### **Members present:**

*Ross Hauck*

*Ken Kerr*

*Rich Homann*

*Tom Corbin*

*Bill Ott*

*Ray Weidenhaft*

*David Hall*

### **Guests:**

*Kurt Kleiner*

*Jim Fletcher- Advisor*

### **Update: Recent Mobilization of Zone Team**

Jim Fletcher updated the group regarding the recent mobilization of a part of the Great Plains Zone Team. Joe Lowe sent a courtesy email saying that part of their Team (State employees only) was currently mobilizing to assist with Hurricane Gustav at the request of the Governor of South Dakota (in support of, and at the request of, the Governor of Louisiana). In the email Joe said that when he arrived he would try to order the other members of the Team. (Though, Jim pointed out, as an EMAC request, it might be difficult.) Rocky Mountain Coordination Center did not know anything about the mobilization, until after the fact.

### **IC Recruitment Letter**

Ken Kerr updated the group regarding the strategy meeting held last week (Aug. 27, 2008), as tasked by the RMCG Chair and Vice-chair, involving several members of RMCG and the Operations Committee (representing State and Federal) to establish direction for the RMA Teams for the upcoming recruitment as directed by the Executive Group.

Ken put together a draft vision and direction letter (dated Sept. 2, 2008) for the Teams which he has sent out to the work group for them to review. He received comments back from the USFS and is awaiting comments from the other members of the group. He is also awaiting the decision of the Great Plains Zone Board on how they would like to proceed with the Zone Team, whether they want to manage the Team, or to what degree they would like RMCG to assist.



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Clarity is essential, and Ken is attempting to convey in the letter what the RMCG and Executive Group expectations are for each of the Teams and the Incident Commanders that will lead them (based on past, current, and future policy directions- both Federal and State).

Ross would like the draft letter sent out to all members of the RMCG.

Bill Ott summarized the USFS comments to the working group regarding the draft letter and commended the emphasis on Teams staffing to the complexity of the incident verses staffing to the roster. In regards to the remainder of the Team not being able to “freelance” when the Short-Team has been ordered, the USFS thinks the Incident Commander should be responsible for releasing the remainder of the Long Team once he/she has arrived at the incident and been able to assess the Short Team and incidents needs.

Bill also revisited the naming of the group (or team) that is being created to assist the Teams with long term planning and/or Wildland Fire Use incidents with capacity building towards the goal of “all teams do all things”. The USFS recommendation is to call it a “Support Management Team” or an “Auxiliary Management Team” (with 7 members having a Wildland Fire Use skill-set, resembling a FUMT- in the draft letter this is referred to as a “Fire Use Team”). Also, an Interagency task group has already laid down a plan for the ground work of a Decision Support Module and there is a cadre in formation. The USFS has provided some comments on what this module might look like; they suggest 3 personnel (an editor/writer, a NFDERS or fire behavior specialist, and a GISS) working in a central location in support of a Team or Teams.

Bill also suggested that RMCG go forward with the call for nominations for ICs for all 4 Teams. Though RMCG is still awaiting a decision on who will manage the Zone Team, whether it is the Operations Committee or the Zone Board, the Coordinating Group should get the nomination process started and then turn it over to whoever will be managing that Team.

In the draft letter it states, regarding the “Fire Use Team, “...this team is not expected to have delegated authority for a fire in most cases...”. A brief discussion about the wording ensued and it was agreed that this would be reworded to better express that in some cases, whether supporting a local Type 3 Team or other extenuating circumstances, the “Fire Use Team” may be the “primary” Team (and thus have delegated authority). Ken agreed to reword the letter to better clarify this proviso.

Ken will incorporate the comments from the call and then send the draft letter out to the working group and RMCG this afternoon. He will be out of the office starting Friday and advises that if the letter is to get out next week, which he recommends, the group should work with Clair Brown to make that happen.



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Ken emphasized that Clair Brown and/or Todd Richardson need to be involved in any actions or discussions regarding the recruitment, as the Operations Committee has been delegated this task- it is their job. He requested that any comments be sent to both himself and Dave Carter.

Bill Ott made a motion that RMCG allow the task group to go forward as discussed, with the Chair, to complete the letter on Wednesday, September 9, at 0930. Mike Davin seconded the motion. Ken requested to recuse himself from the vote due to his involvement as the liaison to the Operations Committee, the author of the letter, and the leader of the task group. After some discussion, the motion is passed.

It was also agreed to go forward with finalizing the letter to include all 4 Teams and await the forthcoming decision by the Zone Board regarding whether or not they will continue to manage the Team. If the Zone Board decides to manage the Zone Team, RMCG will turn over the recruitment process for the Team at that time.

### **Zone Team Assignment**

There were a lot of questions regarding the mobilization of the Zone Team to Hurricane Gustav. The Governor to Governor mobilization has created some concerns about equitable treatment and there are questions as to what would happen if one of the other Type 2 Teams were called by the Governor in their respective State and requested to mobilize. Rich Homann states that the Governor of Colorado would not call the Team IC directly; the Governor would call him (CO State Forest Service). Prior to any action by the Team, RMCG would be involved and have the opportunity to discuss the available options. Ken asked Rich if that was the appropriate response and he agreed that in his opinion, it would be.

Call is adjourned.

### **Upcoming**

September 10: RMCG Task Group and Ops Committee meeting at 0930

October 1: IC applications due to Operations Committee

October 17: IC recommendations due to RMCG

October 21-23: RMCG FALL MEETING...Sidney, NE

*The Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group includes federal and state agency representatives who are responsible for the communications, coordination and implementation of interagency wildland fire management direction in the Rocky Mountain Area*